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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/587,347	08/23/2006	Denys Sournac	0573-1012-1	6637
<small>465</small> YOUNG & THOMPSON 209 Madison Street Suite 500 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			<small>7590</small> EXAMINER RUST, ELLEN C	
			ART UNIT 3733	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 03/24/2009	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

# Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/587,347

**Applicant(s)**

SOURNAC ET AL.

**Examiner**

ELLEN RUST

**Art Unit**

3733

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 June 2008.  
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.  
7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 July 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/CDC)  
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

This Office Action is in response to the Amendment filed June 09, 2008. Claims 1-10 remain pending. Claim 11 has been added.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 6 recites the limitation "the links" in line 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 7 recites the limitation "the surfaces" in line 6. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-4 and 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Altarac et al. (U.S. 7,163,538 B2).

Altarac et al. disclose a device (see Figs. 4 and 5) comprising a bone anchoring member wherein the bone anchoring member is a pedicle screw, a linking rod capable of being connected to the bone anchoring member, and a connection assembly capable of connecting the linking rod to the bone anchoring member, wherein the bone anchoring member is a polyaxial anchoring element having a connection part (see Fig. 5, element 23) articulated with respect to a base portion (see Fig. 5, element 12') intended to be attached to the vertebra. The polyaxial anchoring element further comprises a junction portion (see Fig. 5, element 74) connecting a portion of the connection assembly and the base portion, the junction portion having a flexible structure providing a desirable joint of the connection assembly with respect to the base portion.

The junction portion (see Fig. 5, element 74) is formed by a part distinct from the connection part (see Fig. 5, element 23) of the connection assembly and of the base

portion (see Fig. 4, element 12'). The junction portion (see Fig. 5, element 74) is composed of a rod of flexible material.

The junction portion (see Fig. 5, element 74) is composed of an extension of the base portion (see Fig. 4, element 12') made flexible by an appropriate shape. A surface of the connection assembly (see Fig. 4, element 32) and a surface of the base portion may be bored by lateral bearing surfaces.

The polyaxial anchoring element comprises at least one part (see Fig. 2, element 21) with an elastically deformable structure between part of the connection assembly and the base portion.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 5 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Altarac et al. (U.S. 7,163,538 B2) in view of Studer (U.S. 7,329,258 B2).

Altarac et al. disclose the invention substantially as described above. However, Altarac et al. do not disclose angularly offset stepped radial recesses.

Studer discloses an implant comprising angularly offset stepped radial recesses (see Fig. 1) in the same field of endeavor for the purpose of providing dynamic stabilization to the spine.

It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the junction of Altarac having offset stepped radial recesses, as taught by Studer, in order to permit bending of the junction.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments, filed June 09, 2008, regarding the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 4-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ralph et al. (U.S. 5,882,350) have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicant's arguments regarding the rejection of claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Ralph et al. (U.S. 5,882,350) have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

**Conclusion**

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ELLEN RUST whose telephone number is (571)270-3819. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Thurs., 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo C. Robert can be reached on (571) 272-4719. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/E. R./  
Examiner, Art Unit 3733

/Eduardo C. Robert/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733